

NAMIBIA

- I. The South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)--the only Namibian nationalist group that is recognized by the United Nations General Assembly and the Organization of African Unity--has been gradually building up its guerrilla forces since early 1976, when President Neto opened southern Angola to SWAPO's staging operations and the Cubans in Angola began training a major portion of the recruits fleeing from Namibia.
 - A. SWAPO now has at least 4,000 trained and equipped guerrillas based in southern Angolan and southwestern Zambia, but only small guerrilla units have succeeded in getting through the strong South African defenses along the northern border, and SWAPO has not attained effective control of any populated areas.
 - B. By mid-1977, the gradual increase in small-scale guerrilla attacks on the South Africans and their Namibian supporters ranked among the principal factors that induced South Africa to seriously consider the Western proposal for a Namibia settlement under UN auspices.
- II. Last May South African troops conducted several simultaneous "lightning strikes" against SWAPO bases inside Angola, including one some 250 kilometers from the Namibian border. The South African government apparently ordered the raids, despite the risk of international sanctions, because its leaders realized that even a superior military

force: cannot reverse the increases in guerrilla inroads unless SWAPO's staging bases outside Namibia are destroyed.

A. From a military standpoint, the raids were effective; SWAPO's losses were heavy, and guerrilla activity inside Namibia was lower for several months.

B. In late August a SWAPO unit inside Zambia shelled a South African military outpost in the northeastern tip of Namibia, killing ten South African soldiers. South African troops retaliated by crossing into Zambia to push the guerrillas back from the border zone.

1. The reponse was limited compared with the raids into Angola. The South African government apparently was restrained by two UN Security Council resolutions--one in May that threatened additional sanctions if South Africa launched another major incursion, and another in July, which made a start toward implementing the Western settlement proposal.

III. The Namibian settlement plan, sponsored by the five Western members of the UN Security Council--the US, the UK, France, West Germany, and Canada--calls for a cease-fire, a withdrawal of all but 1,500 of the South African troops while a UN peacekeeping force is phasing in, and an election for a Namibian constituent assembly under UN supervision, after conditions for a fair election have been established. South Africa accepted the Western plan last April; the SWAPO leaders, in July.

A. UN Secretary General Waldheim's recommendations for implementing the plan stipulate a UN military force comprised for seven infantry battalions with a total of 5,000 men, command and logistic

groups totaling 2,300 men, and 200 monitors.

- B. Waldheim also recommends scheduling an election approximately seven months after the Security Council decides to go ahead with a transitional program.

IV. SWAPO leaders have declared their acceptance of Waldheim's recommendations, but are still pressing for cancellation of a voter registration that the South African Administrator General in Namibia began last June despite Western objections. Waldheim intends to review the voter registration for possible revisions.

- A. South African government spokesmen say they will not permit any UN troops to enter Namibia unless the Security Council decides on a maximum strength far below 7,500.
- B. The South Africans also want to hold an election by the end of this year; they fear that a later election date would enable SWAPO candidates to catch up with candidates backed by South African.

V. The members of the Security Council have informally agreed to defer a formal session on Namibia while Waldheim and the Western contact group seek to resolve outstanding problems through consultations with the African Group at the UN and with the South Africans. It is hoped, for instance, that an early cease-fire agreement may open the way to a mutual understanding that actual UN troops deployment will be less than 7,500.

- A. Unfortunately South African leaders are preoccupied with domestic political problems resulting from Prime Minister Vorster's announcement on 20 September that he is resigning due to ill health. The South Africans are likely to put off critical decisions on Namibia until Vorster's successor is chosen.

- B. It is not yet clear whether Vorster's statement on 20 September that a Namibian election will be held by the end of this year reflects a final decision or a bid for further hard bargaining with Waldheim and the Western contact group.